

TESTIMONY before the Public Health and Human Services Committees
9/03/2009
Barbara Albert

Good afternoon members of the Public Health and Human Services Committees, also everyone else.

My name is Barbara Albert, renter in Hartford, registered voter, advocate for human rights, and multiply medically challenged human being. I'm disabled, some visible, most not, and am on Medicare and Medicaid.

I've been a patient at several psychiatric hospitals and detoxes since I was about 20 years old. Two of them being Cedarcrest and Blue Hills Detox. I've also needed several outpatient procedures due to several chronic illnesses. I WILL NOT voluntarily go to an ER because of experiences there.

I have NOT been hospitalized for almost 10 years. When I'm not ill with whatever, I'm very grateful to be involved with several volunteer activities, mostly advocacy for children to elderly, at the neighborhood to the National levels.

Without access to information and effective communication, and the same opportunities and privileges as any other person, I would not be as effective an advocate, a volunteer, another human being participating with others, being given a chance to feel there is purpose, that people like me are NOT "non-essential".

I'm very well aware that money driven medicine is not just at the state level. I believe there is no justification for making access to basic human needs more challenging, particularly to those who need help most. We live in a society, not an economy.

Article 25 of the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights, says " Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well being of himself and his family, including food, clothing, housing, and medical care, and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age or lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond his control."

In ending I'd like to quote Hermann Melville. "Of all the preposterous assumptions of humanity over humanity, nothing exceeds the criticisms made of the habits of the poor by the well-housed, the well-warmed, and the well-fed."

Thank you for listening.